

## Nod for ethanol extraction from foodgrains

The Centre has extended the ambit of the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme to extract fuel from surplus quantities of maize, jowar, bajra and fruit/vegetable waste.

The decision was taken last Monday and will be applicable for procurement for the 2018-19 ethanol supply year. Till now, only excess sugarcane was allowed to be converted into ethanol for procurement under the EBP programme.

An official statement said the decision will benefit farmers by enabling them to make additional money from surplus production and broaden the sources for producing ethanol under the EBP programme.

"The National Policy on Bio-fuels 2018 has empowered the National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC) to allow conversion of surplus quantities of foodgrains for production of ethanol during an agriculture crop year, when there is projected over-supply of foodgrains as anticipated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare," the statement said.



Under the EBP programme, the Centre has asked oil marketing companies (OMCs) to target 10 per cent blending of ethanol with petrol by 2022.

However, there is a major shortfall in the availability of ethanol as sugar mills currently tap only C-heavy molasses for ethanol production.

According to data compiled by the Indian Sugar Mills Association, the nationwide average for ethanol blending stood at 4.02 per cent as of October 1.

Keeping this in mind, the government earlier this year came out with a modified biofuels policy that incentivised sugar mills that tap B-heavy molasses and cane juice for producing ethanol.

Hindu Business Line

1/12/2018